

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 252

By Hardaway

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the organizers, sponsors, and participants of the Africa in April Cultural Awareness Festival upon the celebration of the event's twenty-fifth anniversary.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is proud to salute those exemplary events that bring great honor and acclaim to Tennessee and serve to enrich the cultural fabric of this great State; and

WHEREAS, the Africa in April Cultural Awareness Festival is one such estimable event, which will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, from April 14 to April 17, 2011, Memphians and people from across the South will congregate at Robert R. Church Park on world famous Beale Street to celebrate this laudable event, which was first held in 1986; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to share the enriching experience, unifying power, and sheer joy of cultural exchange, Africa in April features four days of cultural diversity through the exhibition of ethnic music, cuisine, education, economics, transportation, technology, history, fashion, arts, crafts, and creative performances; and

WHEREAS, Africa in April enhances the lives of everyone in the community by providing an avenue for community leaders and organizations, government officials, students, the elderly, businesses, and religious organizations to learn more about the accomplishments of Africans and African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, this year, the Republic of Senegal will be showcased from an international perspective through a multiplicity of mediums, highlighting the African nation's many accomplishments, unique customs, and rich history; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Senegal is a country south of the Sénégal River in western Africa; Dakar, the capital city of Senegal, is located at the westernmost tip of the country on the Cap-Vert peninsula; and

WHEREAS, about 300 miles off the coast, in the Atlantic Ocean, lie the Cape Verde Islands; during colonial times, numerous trading Counters, belonging to various colonial empires were established along the coast; and

WHEREAS, the town of St Louis became the capital of French Western Africa before it was moved to Dakar in 1902; Dakar later became its capital in 1960 at the time of independence from France; and

WHEREAS, the French colonies of Senegal and the French Sudan were merged in 1959 and granted their independence as the Mali Federation in 1960; however, the union broke up after only a few months; and

WHEREAS, Senegal joined with the Gambia to form the nominal confederation of Senegambia in 1982; the envisaged integration of the two countries was never carried out, and the union was dissolved in 1989; and

WHEREAS, today, with its long history of participating in international peacekeeping and regional mediation, Senegal is one of the most stable democracies in Africa; and

WHEREAS, in attendance at this year's event will be Abdoulaye Wade, the third and current President of Senegal and Secretary-General of the Senegalese Democratic Party; and

WHEREAS, representatives from the City of Memphis, Shelby County, parochial schools, area colleges and universities, and community organizations and institutions will participate in the event and enjoy a diverse cultural marketplace; and

WHEREAS, Africa in April's immense success is due in large part to the assiduous efforts of founders and directors Dr. David L. Acey, Sr., an Assistant Professor of African-American Rhetoric and Interracial Communication at the University of Memphis, and Yvonne Acey, a Memphis City Schools instructor assigned to English, African-American Literature and Creative Writing; and

WHEREAS, for the past twenty-five years, Africa in April has inspired, entertained, and educated thousands, and as one of the finest cultural attractions in Shelby County and all of the Mid-South, it should be properly recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Africa in April Cultural Awareness Festival, as we commend and thank the organizers, sponsors, and participants of this outstanding event for their contributions to the expansion of the cultural horizon of this State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.